
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 179

AN ACT CONCERNING THE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AND DEMENTIA TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON TRAINING.

SUMMARY:

This bill establishes mandatory Alzheimer's and dementia-specific training for a wide range of personnel, including physicians, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), police, probate judges, paid conservators, and protective services employees.

It requires staff in Alzheimer's special care units hired on or after October 1, 2014 to complete the currently required initial Alzheimer's and dementia-specific training within the first 120 days of employment. Under current law, the training must be completed within six months of employment.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2014, except for the provisions on Alzheimer's training for nursing home administrator's license applicants (§§ 5 & 6), which are effective November 1, 2014.

§ 1 — NURSING HOMES DEMENTIA PATIENTS

By law, nursing home administrators must ensure that all facility staff receive in-service training in an area specific to the needs of the patients. The bill specifically requires that they receive training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care upon employment and annually thereafter.

It requires the administrator to name an employee in each home to (1) review and make recommendations to him or her about residents with dementia and (2) monitor the implementation of approved recommendations. The recommendations must include (1) factors that affect person-centered care, (2) wellness indicators, and (3) programs to train staff to care for patients with dementia.

The bill also requires the Department of Public Health (DPH) commissioner to adopt implementing regulations.

§ 2 — NURSING HOME AND HOSPICE STAFF

The bill requires home health agencies, residential care homes, and assisted living services agencies and licensed hospice care organizations to provide to all staff providing direct care, upon employment and annually thereafter, training and education in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care. It also requires the DPH commissioner to adopt implementing regulations.

§ 3 — STAFF SERVING PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME

The bill requires the developmental services commissioner's regulations to mandate that all residential facilities serving people age 50 or older with Down syndrome have at least one employee trained in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care. This is in addition to other training and requirements under existing law.

§ 4 — ALZHEIMER'S UNIT STAFF

By law, all licensed and registered staff and nurses' aides who provide direct care to patients in Alzheimer's special care units or programs must receive Alzheimer's and dementia-specific training, including at least eight hours of dementia-specific training annually. Unregistered and unlicensed staff, except nurse's aides, who provide services and care to residents must complete one hour of such training annually.

The bill requires staff hired on or after October 1, 2014 to complete the initial training within the first 120 days of employment. Under current law, staff must complete this training within six months after being hired.

§§ 5 & 6 — NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR NEW APPLICANT LICENSE

The bill requires anyone applying for a new nursing home administrator's license by examination to have completed training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care, in addition to

training and qualifications required by existing law.

It requires anyone applying for this license by endorsement to (1) have training or education in long-term care, including Alzheimer's and dementia symptoms and care, or (2) certify, in writing, that he or she will get such training not later than 120 days after being licensed.

§ 7 — NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATORS CONTINUING EDUCATION

The bill requires nursing home administrators to take training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms as part of the 40-hour continuing education training they must take every two years under existing law. It adds courses offered by the Alzheimer's Association to the qualifying continuing education courses.

§ 8 — NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The bill requires the DPH commissioner to include Alzheimer's disease and dementia in the course or degree requirements for licensure of nursing home administrators. Among the other existing requirements are management behavior, nursing home administration psychosocial behavior, and gerontology.

§ 9 — PHYSICIANS

The bill requires that the continuing medical examination (CME) for physicians include training or education on Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care. By law, physicians, unless exempt, must take one contact hour in specified topics during the first renewal period for which CME is required (the second license renewal), and once every six years after that. The mandatory topics for CME currently include infectious diseases, risk management, sexual assault, domestic violence, and cultural competency.

§ 10 — POLICE OFFICERS

The bill requires police initial and review training programs to include training in cognitive disorders and diseases, including Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care. It applies to the State Police, Police Officer Standards and Training Council, and

municipal police departments' training programs.

§ 11 — REPRESENTATIVES OF NURSING HOME AND LONG-TERM REHABILITATION FACILITIES

The bill requires the state long-term care ombudsman to provide training to representatives of residents in nursing homes and residential care facilities in areas such as Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care. By law, a "representative" is a regional ombudsman, a resident's advocate, or an employee of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Office designated by the ombudsman.

§ 12 — PROBATE JUDGES, CONSERVATORS, AND FIDUCIARIES

The bill requires the probate court administrator to develop a plan to train probate judges, paid conservators, and other fiduciaries in diseases and disorders affecting a person's judgment, including Alzheimer's disease and dementia.

§ 13 — PROTECTIVE SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY PROGRAM

The bill requires the Department of Social Services (DSS) commissioner to ensure that all employees assigned to DSS' protective services for the elderly program who interact directly with seniors receive annual training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care.

§ 14 — EMTs

The bill requires that the 30 hours of refresher training required every three years for EMT recertification include training in Alzheimer's disease and dementia symptoms and care.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Aging Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 12 Nay 0 (03/11/2014)